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SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST®

MOTHER AND TEACHER (Mater et Magistra)

Following is the full text of the recently published social encylical of His Holiness Pope John XXIII in the translation released by the Vatican Press Office (subtitles added).

To Our Venerable Brethren, the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See and to all the Clergy and Faithful of the Catholic World.

Pope John XXIII

Venerable Brethren and Dear Sons: Health and Apostolic Benediction.

Mother and teacher of all nations, the Universal Church has been instituted by Jesus Christ so that all who in the long course of centuries come to her loving embrace may find fullness of higher life and a guarantee of salvation.

To this Church, "the pillar and ground of truth,"[1] her Most Holy Founder has entrusted the double task of begetting children and of educating and governing them, guiding with maternal providence the life both of individuals and of peoples, the dignity of which she has always held in the higest respect and guarded with watchful care.

Christianity is truly a joining together of earth with heaven in that it takes man concretely, spirit and matter, intellect and will, and invites him to raise his mind above the changing conditions of earthly existence to the heights of eternal life which will be consummated in unending happiness and peace.

Hence although the Holy Church has the special task of sanctifying souls and making them participants in goods of the supernatural order, she is also solicitous for the exigencies of the daily life of men, not merely those concerning the nourishment of the body and the material conditions of life, but also those that concern prosperity and culture in all its many aspects and stages.

Teaching and Actions of Christ

In this activity the Church is carrying out the command of her Founder, Christ, who refers primarily to man's eternal salvation when He says, "I am the way and the truth and the life"[2] and "I am the light of the world."[3] On other occasions, however, seeing the hungry crowd, He was moved to exclaim, "I have compassion on this multitude,"[4] thereby showing that He was also concerned about the earthly needs of men.

The Divine Redeemer shows this care not only by His words but also by the actions of His life, as when to alleviate the hunger of the crowds He several times miraculously multiplied bread. By means of this bread, given for the nourishment of the body, He wished to pre-announce that heavenly food of the soul which He was to give to men on the vigil of His Passion.

It is no wonder then that the Church, in imitation of Christ and in fulfillment of His command, has for 2,000 years, from the institution of the early deacons to the present time, held aloft the torch of charity by her teaching and her generous example. It has held aloft the torch of that charity which, by harmoniously blending together the precepts and the practice of mutual love, puts into effect in a wonderful way the commandment of the twofold giving by word and by deed in which is summarized the social teaching and activity of the Church.

Repercussions of First Social Encyclical

An outstanding instance of this teaching and action, carried on by the Church throughout the ages, is undoubtedly the immortal encyclical, "Rerum Novarum,"[5] issued 70 years ago by Our predecessor Leo XIII of happy memory, to enunciate the principles according to which the question of the worker could be settled in a Christian manner.

Seldom have the words of a pontiff had such universal repercussions on account of the profundity of the arguments used, their scope and incisiveness. Indeed these directives and appeals have had such importance that they can never fall into oblivion.

A new path was opened for the action of the Church, whose supreme pastor by making his own the suffering, cries and aspirations of the lowly and oppressed, once again constituted himself the guardian of their rights.

Even today, in spite of the long lapse of time, the power of that message is still operative in the documents of the popes who succeeded Leo XIII and who in their social teaching repeatedly returned to the Leonine encyclical, at one time to draw inspiration from it at another to clarify its application, but always to find in it a stimulus to Catholic activity.

That power is also operative in the very legislation of nations.

This is a sign that the solidly grounded principles, the historical directives and the paternal appeals contained in the masterly encyclical of Our predecessor preserve today their value and even suggest new and vital criteria so that men can judge the nature and extent of the social question as it presents itself today and can face up to their respective responsibilities.

Part I

Teaching of the Encyclical "Rerum Novarum"

Developments in the Doctrines of Pius XI and Pius XII

Leo XIII spoke in a time of radical transformations, of heightened contrasts and of bitter revolt. The shadows cast by that period enable us to appreciate more accurately the light that radiated from his teaching.

As is well known, the conception of the economic world that was most widely accepted at that time and very largely carried out in practice, was a naturalistic one that denied any relation between economic activity and morality. It was alleged that the only motive of economic action was personal profit. The supreme rule reguating the relations between economic agents was free competition without limit.

Interest on capital, prices of goods and services, profits and wages, were determined purely mechanically by the laws of the market. The state, it was held, should refrain from all intervention in the economic field. Trade unions, according to the conditions of the different countries, were either forbidden, tolerated or considered to have legal personality in private law.

In an economic world thus constituted, the law of the strongest was fully justified on theoretical grounds, and in practice governed the concrete relations between men. There thus resulted an economic order that was radically deranged.

While enormous riches accumulated in the hands of a few, the working classes found themselves in conditions of increasing hardship. Wages were insufficient or at starvation level, conditions of work were oppressive and without respect for physical health, moral behavior and religious faith.

Especially inhuman were the working conditions to which children and women were subjected. The specter of unemployment was ever present and the family was exposed to a process of disintegration.

Hence, there was wide-spread dissatisfaction among the working classes, among whom a spirit of protest and revolt permeated and grew stronger. All these things explain why among these classes extremist theories that propounded remedies worse than the evil to be cured, found widespread favor.

The Way of Reconstruction

In such difficult times, it was for Leo XIII to proclaim his social message based on the very nature of man and animated by the principles and spirit of the Gospel. It was a message that on its very appearance, in spite of some understandable opposition, aroused widespread admiration and enthusiasm.

This was certainly not the first time that the Apostolic See descended into the arena of earthly interest in defense of the needy. Other documents of Leo XIII had previously marked out the path. But here was formulated an organic synthesis of principles joined to such a wide historical perspective that the encyclical "Rerum Novarum" because a summary of Catholicism in the economic-social field.

This action was not without hazard, because while some alleged that the Church, face to face with the social question, should confine herself to preaching resignation to the poor and to exhorting the rich to generosity, Leo XIII did not hesitate to proclaim and defend the legitimate rights of the worker.

At the outset of his exposition of Catholic teaching on social matters, he solemnly declared: "We approach the subject with confidence and in the exercise of the rights which belong to Us. For no practical solution of the question will ever be found without the assistance of religion and the Church."[6]

Basic Principles

To you, venerable brethren, are well known those basic principles, expounded with as much authority as clarity by the immortal pontiff, according to which the economic-social sector of human society should be reconstituted.

They first and foremost concern work, which ought to be valued and treated not just as a commodity but as an expression of the human person. For the great majority of mankind, work is the only source from which they draw their means of livelihood, and so its remuneration cannot be left to the mechanical play of market forces.

Instead, it should be determined by justice and equity, which otherwise would be profoundly harmed even if the contract of work should have been freely entered into by both parties. Private property, including that of productive goods, is a natural right which the state cannot suppress. Embedded within it is a social function, and it is, thus, a right that is exercised for one's personal benefit and for the good of others.

The state, the reason for whose existence is the realization of the common good in the temporal order, cannot keep aloof from the economic world. It should be present to promote in a suitable manner the production of a sufficient supply of material goods, "the use of which is necessary for the practice of virtue,"[7] and to watch over the rights of all citizens, especially of the weaker, such as workers, women and children. It is also its ineluctable task to contribute actively to the betterment of the conditions of life of the workers.

Industrial Relations

It is further the duty of the state to see to it that work relations are regulated according to justice and equity and that in the environment of work the dignity of the human being is not violated in body or spirit.

On this point attention is drawn to the guiding lines of the Leonine encyclical on which the social legislation of modern nations has been patterned and which, as Pius XI already noted in the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno,"[8] have contributed efficaciously to the rise and development of a new and most desirable branch of jurisprudence, namely labor law.

In the encyclical the right of the workers alone, or of groups made up of workers and owners, to associate is declared to be natural, as are also the right to adopt that organizational structure which the workers consider most suitable to attain their legitimate economic-professional interests, and the right to act autonomously and by personal initiative within the associations for the achievement of these ends.

Workers and employers should regulate their mutual relations under the inspiration of the principle of human solidarity and Christian brotherhood, because both competition in the liberal sense and the class struggle in the Marxist sense are contrary to nature and the Christian conception of life. These, venerable brethren, are the fundamental principles on which a healthy economic-social order can be built.

Catholic Activities

It is not surprising, therefore, that the more ably endowed Catholics, responsive to the appeals of the encyclical, began many activities in order to translate these principles into reality. Indeed, under the impulse of objective needs of a similar nature, men of good will from all the nations of the earth were also moved to act in a similar manner. For these reasons, the encyclical was rightly acknowledged as the Magna Charta[9] of the economic-social reconstruction of the modern era.

The Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno"

Pius XI, Our predecessor of holy memory, after a lapse of 40 years, commemorated the encyclical "Rerum Novarum" with another solemn document, the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno."[10]

In it the Supreme Pontiff confirmed the right and duty of the Church to make its irreplaceable contribution to the correct solution of the pressing and grave problems that beset the human family. He confirms the fundamental principles and the historic directives of the Leonine encyclical.

In addition, he took the opportunity to make more precise some points of that teaching on which, even among Catholics, some doubts had arisen, and to reformulate Christian social thoughts in response to the changed conditions of the times. The doubts that had thus arisen concerned particularly private property, the wage system and the attitude of Catholics towards a type of modern socialism.

Concerning private property, Our predecessor reaffirms its natural law character and emphasizes its social aspect with its corresponding function.

The Wage System

Turning to the wage system, he rejects the view that would declare it unjust by its very nature. But, at the same time, he condemns the inhuman and unjust forms under which it is often found. He repeats and enlarges upon the criteria to be used and the conditions to be satisfied if the wage system is not to violate justice or equity.

On this point, Our predecessor clearly points out that, in the present circumstances, it is advisable that the contract of work be modified by elements taken from the contract of partnership, in such a way that "the wage earners are made sharers in some sort in the ownership, or the management, or the profits."[11]

Of the greatest doctrinal and practical importance is his affirmation that "if the social and individual character of labor be overlooked, it can be neither equitably appraised nor properly recompensed to strict justice."[12]

Hence, the Pope declares that in determining wages justice requires that, in addition to the needs of the individual workers and their family responsibilities, one should also consider both the conditions in the productive organizations in which the workers carry on their labor and the demands of "the public economic good."[13]

Communism and Socialism

He emphasizes that the opposition between communism and Christianity is fundamental, and makes it clear that Catholics are in no way permitted to be supporters of moderate socialism, because its concept of life is bounded by time, inasmuch as it places its supreme objective in the welfare of society, and because it either proposes a form of social structure that aims solely at production, thus causing grave loss to human liberty, or lacks every principle of true social authority.

Changes in Economic System

Pius XI was not unaware that, in the 40 years that had passed since the appearance of the Leonine encyclical, historical conditions had profoundly altered. In fact, free competition, due to its own instrinsic tendencies, had ended by almost destroying itself. It had caused a great accumulation of wealth and a corresponding concentration of economic power in the hands of a few who "are frequently not the owners, but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their good pleasures."[14]

Therefore, as the Pope discerningly notes: "Free competition is dead; economic dictatorship has taken its place. Unbridled ambition for domination was succeeded by the desire for gain; the whole economic life has become hard, cruel, and relentless in a ghastly measure,"[15] thus subjecting the public authority to the interests of group and issuing forth in international imperialism in financial affairs.

To remedy such a state of affairs, the Pope points out as fundamental the reinstatement of the economic world in the moral order and the striving for individual or group interests, within the framework of the common good. This implied, according to his teaching, the reconstruction of human society by the reconstituting of intermediate bodies, autonomous in their economic-professional finality and not imposed by the state but created by the respective members.

Public authority should resume its duties of promoting the common good of all. Finally, there should be cooperation on a world scale even in economic matters among the nations.

The fundamental points that characterize the masterly encyclical of Pius XI can be reduced to two.

Supreme Criteria

The first is that one cannot take as the supreme criteria of economic activities and institutions the interest of individuals or of groups, nor free competition nor economic power, nor the prestige or power of the nation, nor other similar criteria.

Instead the supreme criteria of such activities and institutions are justice and social charity.

The second is that men should strive to achieve a national and international juridical order with a complex of public and private permanent institutions inspired by social justice, to which the economic sector should be conformed, thus making it less difficult for economic agents to carry out their tasks in conformity with the demands of justice and within the framework of the common good.

Radio Message of Pentecost 1941

In defining and developing the Christian social doctrine great contributions have been made by Pope Pius XII, Our predecessor of venerable memory, who on the feast of Pentecost, June 1, 1941, broadcast a message "in order to call to the attention of the Catholic world a memory worthy of being written in letters of gold on the calendar of the Church: the 50th anniversary of the publication of the epoch-making social encyclical of Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum"[16] and "to render to Almighty God from the bottom of Our hearts Our humble thanks for the gift which . . . He bestowed on the Church in that encyclical of His vicar on earth and to praise Him for the lifegiving breath of the spirit which through it, in ever growing measure from that time on, has blown on all mankind."[17]

In the radio message the great Pontiff claims for the Church "the indisputable competence" to "decide whether the bases of a given social system are in accord with the unchangeable order which God Our Creator and Redeemer has shown us through the natural law and revelation."[18]

He confirms the perennial vitality and inexhaustible rightness of the teaching of the encyclical "Rerum Novarum." He takes the occassion "to give some further directive moral principles on three fundamental values of social and economic life. These three fundamental values, which are closely connected one with the other, mutually complementary and dependent, are: The use of material goods, labor and the family."[19]

Right to Sustenance

Concerning the use of material goods, Our predecessor declares that the right of every man to use them for his own sustenance is prior to every other right of economic import and so is prior to the right of property. Undoubtedly, adds Our predecessor, the right to property in material goods is also a natural right.

Nevertheless, in the objective order established by God, the right to property should be so arranged that it is not an obstacle to the satisfaction of "the unquestionable need that the goods, which were created by God for all men, should flow equally to all, according to the principles of justice and charity."[20]

Work is Duty and Right

Taking up a point that occurs in the Leonine encyclical, Pius XII declares that work is at one and the same time a duty and a right of every human being. Consequently, it is for men in the first place to regulate their mutual relations of work.

Only in the event that the interested parties do not or cannot fulfill their functions, does "it fall back on the state to intervene in the field of labor and in the division and distribution of work according to the form and measure that the common good properly understood demands."[21]

In dealing with the family, the Supreme Pontiff affirms that private ownership of material goods is also considered as being linked with "the existence and development" of the family, that is to say with an apt means "to secure for the father of a family the healthy liberty he needs in order to fulfill the duties assigned him by the Creator regarding the physical, spiritual and religious welfare of the family."[22]

Emigration

In this also is included the right to emigrate. On this point Our predecessor observes that when the states, both those that permit emigration and those that accept immigrants, try to eliminate "as far as possible all obstacles to the birth and growth of real confidence"[23] among themselves, mutual advantages result, and together they contribute to the well-being of mankind and the progress of culture.

The situation, already changed during the period mentioned by Pius XII, has undergone in these two decades profound transformations both in the internal structure of each political community and in their mutual relations.

Nuclear Energy

In the field of science, technology and economics: The discovery of nuclear energy, its application first to the purposes of war and later its increasing employment for peaceful ends; the unlimited possibilities opened up by chemistry in synthetic products; the growth of automation in the sectors of industry and services; the modernization of the agricultural sector; the virtual disappearance of distances through communication effected especially by radio and television; the increased speed in transportation; the initial conquests of interplanetary space.

Social Security

In the social field: the development of systems for social insurance, and in some more economically advanced political communities the introduction of social security systems; in labor movements the formation of, and the increased importance attached to, a more responsible attitude toward the greater socio-economic problems; a progressive improvement of basic education; an ever wider distribution of welfare; an increased social mobility and the resulting decline in the divisions among the classes; the interest in world events on the part of those with an average education.

Economic and Social Imbalance

Furthermore, the increased efficiency of economic systems in a growing number of political communities helps to underscore the lack of economic-social balance between the agricultural sector on the one hand and the sector of industry and services on the other; between economically developed and less developed areas within the individual political communities; and on a world-wide plane, the even more pronounced socio-economic inequality existing between economically advanced countries and those in the process of development.

Political Changes

In the political field: the participation in public life in many political communities of an increasing number of citizens coming from diverse social strata; a more extensive and deeper activity of public authorities in the economic and social field.

To these must also be added, on the international level, the end of colonial regimes and the attainment of political independence of the peoples of Asia and Africa; the growth of close relationships between the peoples and a deepening of their interdependence; the appearance on the scene and development of an ever growing network of organizations with a world-wide scope and inspired by supranational criteria: organizations with economic, social, cultural and political ends.

Reasons For The New Encyclical

Therefore We feel it Our duty to keep alive the torch lighted by Our great predecessors and to exhort all to draw from it inspiration and orientation in the search for a solution to social problems more adapted to our times.

For this reason, on the occasion of the solemn commemoration of the Leonine encyclical, We are happy to have the opportunity to confirm and specify points of doctrine already treated by Our predecessors and, at the same time, to elucidate further the mind of the Church with respect to the new and more important problems of the day.

Part II

Explanation and Development of the Teaching in "Rerum Novarum"

Private Initiative and Intervention of the Public Authorities in the Field of Economics

First of all, it should be affirmed that the economic order is the creation of the personal initiative of private citizens themselves, working either individually or in association with each other in various ways for the prosecution of common interests.

But here, for the reasons Our predecessors have pointed out, the public authorities must not remain inactive if they are to promote productive development in a proper way on behalf of social progress for the benefit of all citizens. Their action, whose nature is to direct, stimulate, coordinate, supply and integrate, should be inspired by the "principle of subsidiarity"[24] formulated by Pius XI in the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno":

"This is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, unshaken and unchangeable. Just as it is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to the community at large what private enterprise and industry can accomplish, so too it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies; of its very nature, the true aim of all social activity should be to help individual members of the social body, but never to destroy or absorb them."[25]

Reducing Inequalities

It cannot be denied that today the development of scientific knowledge and productive technology offers the public authorities concrete possibilities of reducing the inequality between the various sectors of production, between the various areas of political communities and between the various countries themselves on a worldwide scale.

This development also puts it within their capability to control fluctuations in the economy and, with hope of success, to prevent the recurrence of massive unemployment. Consequently, those in authority who are responsible for the common good, feel the need not only to exercise in the field of economics a multiform action, at once more vast, more profound and more organic, but also it is required, for this same end, that they give themselves suitable structures, tasks, means and methods.

Personal Initiative and Services of the State

But the principle must always be reaffirmed that the presence of the state in the economic field, no matter how widespread and penetrating, must not be exercised so as to reduce evermore the sphere of freedom of the personal initiative of individual citizens, but rather so as to guarantee in that sphere the greatest possible scope, by the effective protection for each and all, of the essential personal rights, among which is to be numbered the right that individual persons possess of being always primarily responsible for their own upkeep and that of their own family, which implies that in economic systems the free development of productive activities should be permitted and facilitated.

For the rest, historic evolution itself puts into relief ever more clearly that there cannot be a well ordered and fruitful society without the support in the economic field both of the individual citizen and of the public authorities; a working together in harmony in the proportions corresponding to the needs of the common good in the changing situations and vicissitudes of human life.

Experience, in fact, shows that where the personal initiative of individuals is lacking, there is political tyranny. But there is also stagnation in the economic sectors engaged in the production especially of the wide range of consumer goods and services which pertain, in addition to material needs, to the requirements of the spirit—goods and services which call into play in a special way the creative talents of individuals.

While, where the due services of the state are lacking or defective, there is incurable disorder and exploitation of the weak on the part of the unscrupulous strong who flourish in every land and at all times, like the cockle among the wheat.

Socialization: Origin and Scope

One of the typical aspects which characterize our epoch is socialization, understood as the progressive multiplication of relations in society, with different forms of life and activity, and juridical institutionalization. This is due to many historical factors, among which must be numbered technical and scientific progress, a greater productive efficiency and a higher standard of living among citizens.

Socialization is, at one and the same time, an effect and a cause of the growing intervention of the public authorities in even the most crucial matters, such as those concerning the care of health, the instruction and education of the younger generation, the controlling of professional careers and the methods of care and rehabilitation of those variously handicapped. But it is also the

fruit and expression of a natural tendency almost irrepressible in human beings, the tendency to join together to attain objectives which are beyond the capacity and means at the disposal of single individuals. A tendency of this sort has given life, especially in these last decades, to a wide range of groups, movements, associations and institutions with economic, cultural, social, sporting, recreational, professional and political ends, both within single national communities and on an international level.

Evaluation

It is clear that socialization, so understood, brings many advantages. It makes possible, in fact, the satisfaction of many personal rights, especially those called economic-social, such as, for example, the right to the indispensable means of human maintenance, to health services, to instruction at a higher level, to a more thorough professional formation, to housing, to work, to suitable leisure and to recreation. In addition, through the ever more perfect organization of modern means for the diffusion of thought — press, cinema, radio, television — it is made possible for individuals to take part in human events on a worldwide scale.

Organizations Increase

At the same time, however, socialization multiplies the forms of organizations and makes the juridical control of relations between men of every walk of life ever more detailed. As a consequence, it restricts the range of the individual as regards his liberty of action. It uses means, follows methods and creates an atmosphere which makes it difficult for each one to think independently of outside influences, to work of his own initiative, to exercise his responsibility and to affirm and enrich his personality.

Ought it to be concluded, then, that socialization, growing in extent and depth, necessarily reduces men to automatons? This is a question which must be answered negatively.

For socialization is not to be considered as a product of natural forces working in a deterministic way. It is, on the contrary, as We have observed, a creation of men, of beings conscious, free and intended by nature to work in a responsible way, even if in their so acting they are obliged to recognize and respect the laws of economic development and social progress and cannot escape from all the pressures of their environment.

Advantages of Socialization

Hence, We consider that socialization can and ought to be realized in such a way as to draw from it the advantages contained therein and to remove or restrain the negative aspects.

For this purpose, then, it is required that a sane view of the common good be present and operative in men invested with public authority, a view which is formed by all those social conditions which permit and favor for the human race the integral development of their personality.

Moreover, We consider necessary that the intermediary bodies and the numerous social enterprises, in which above all socialization tends to find its expression and its activity, enjoy an effective autonomy in regard to the public authorities and pursue their own specific interests in loyal collaboration between themselves, subordinate, however, to the demands of the common good. For it is no less necessary that the above-mentioned groups present the form and substance of a true community, that is that the individual members be considered and treated as persons and encouraged to take an active part in their life.

Order Is Realized

In the development of the organizations of modern society, order is realized ever more with a renewed balance between the need of the autonomous and active collaboration of all, individuals and groups, and the timely coordination of the direction of the public authority.

So long as socialization confines its activity within the limits of the moral order, along the lines indicated, it does not of its nature entail serious dangers of restriction to the detriment of individual human beings.

Instead, it helps to promote in them the expression and development of truly personal characteristics. It produces, too, an organic reconstruction of society, which Our predecessor Pius XI in the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno"[26] put forward and defended as the indispensable prerequisite for satisfying the demands of social justice.

Remuneration of Work

Our heart is filled with a deep sadness in contemplating the immeasurably sorrowful spectacle of vast numbers of workers in many lands and entire continents who are paid wages which condemn them and their families to subhuman conditions of life. This is doubtless due, among other reasons, to the fact that in these countries and continents the process of industrialization is just beginning or is still insufficiently developed.

In some of these countries, however, there stands in harsh and offensive contrast to the wants of the great majority the abundance and unbridled luxury of the privileged few. In still other countries, the present generation is compelled to undergo inhuman privations in order to increase the output of the national economy at a rate of acceleration which goes beyond the limits permitted by justice and humanity, while in other countries a notable percentage of income is absorbed in building up or furthering an ill-conceived national prestige, or vast sums are spent on armaments.

Moreover, in the economically developed countries it not rarely happens that while great and sometimes very great remuneration is made for the performance of some small task, or one of doubtful value, the diligent and profitable work of whole classes of decent, hard-working men receives a payment that is much too small, insufficient or in no way corresponding to their contribution to the good of the community, to the profit of the undertakings in which they are engaged or to the general national economy.

We judge it, therefore, to be Our duty to reaffirm once again that the remuneration of work, just as it cannot be left entirely to the laws of the market, so neither can it be fixed arbitrarily. It must rather be determined according to justice and equity.

This requires that workers should be paid a wage which allows them to live a truly human life and to face up with dignity to their family responsibilities. But it requires, too, that in the assessment of their remuneration regard be had to their effective contribution to the production and the economic state of the enterprise, to the requirement of the common good of the respective political communities, especially with regard to the repercussions on the overall employment of the labor force in the entire country, and also to the requirements of the universal common good, that is, of international communities of different nature and scope.

It is clear that the standards of judgment set forth above are binding always and everywhere, but the degree according to which concrete cases are to be applied cannot be established without reference to the available wealth, wealth which can vary in both quantity and quality and which can, and in fact does, vary from country to country and within the same country from time to time.

Adjustment Between Economic Development and Social Progress

Whereas the economies of various countries are evolving rapidly and at an even more intense pace during this postwar period, We consider it opportune to call attention to a fundamental principle, namely that social progress should accompany and be adujsted to economic development so that all classes of citizens can participate in the increased productivity. Attentive vigilance and effective effort must be made so that socio-economic inequalities do not increase but rather that they be lessened as much as possible.

"Likewise the national economy," observes Our predecessor Pius XII with evident justification, "as it is the product of the men who work together in the community of the state, has no other end than to secure without interruption the material conditions in which the individual life of the citizen may fully develop. Where this is secured in a permanent way, a people will be in a true sense economically rich, because the general well-being, and consequently the personal right of all to the use of worldly goods, is thus actuated in conformity with the purpose willed by the Creator."[27]

Efficacious Distribution

From this it follows that the economic wealth of a people arises not only from an aggregate abundance of goods, but also and more so from their real and efficacious redistribution according to justice as a guarantee

of the personal development of the members of society, which is the true scope of a national economy.

We must here call attention to the fact that in many economies today, the medium and large enterprises not rarely effect rapid and large productive developments by means of self-financing. In such cases We hold that the workers should acquire shares in the firms in which they are engaged, especially when they earn no more than the minimum salary.

In this matter we must recall the principle explained by Our predecessor Pius XI in the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno": "It is totally false to ascribe to capital alone or to labor alone that which is obtained by the joint effort of the one and the other. And it is flagrantly unjust that either should deny the efficacy of the other and seize all the profits."[28]

The demand of justice referred to can be satisfied in many ways suggested by experience. One of these, and among the most desirable, is to see to it that the workers, in the manner and to the degree most convenient, be able to participate in the ownership of the enterprise itself, since today more than in the times of Our predecessor "every effort, therefore, must be made that at least in the future a just share only of the fruit of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy, and that an ample sufficiency be supplied to the workingmen."[29]

But we should, moreover, remember that adjustments between recompense for work and returns be brought about in conformity with the demands of the common good, both of one's own community and of the entire human family.

The Common Good

The demands of the common good on the national level must be considered: To provide employment to the greatest number of workers; to take care lest privileged classes arise, even among the workers; to maintain an equal balance between wages and prices and make goods and services accessible to the greater number of citizens; to eliminate or keep within limits the inequalities between the sectors of agriculture, industry and services; to bring about a balance between economic expansion and the development of essential public services; to adjust as far as possible the means of production to the progress of science and technology, to regulate the improvements in the tenor of life of the present generation with the objective of preparing a better future for the coming generations.

There are also demands for the common good on the world level: To avoid all forms of unfair competition between the economies of different countries; to encourage with fruitful understanding collaboration among these national economies; to cooperate in the economic development of communities which are economically less advanced.

It is obvious that the demands of the common good, referred to both on the national and world level, are to be kept in mind when there is a question of determining the rate of return to be assigned as profit to those responsible for the direction of the enterprise and to the contributors' capital in the form of interest and dividends.

Justice and Structure of Enterprise

Justice is to be observed not only in the distribution of wealth, but also with reference to the structures of the enterprises in which productive activity unfolds itself. There is, in fact, an innate exigency in human nature which demands that when men are engaged in productive activity, they have the opportunity of employing their own responsibility and perfecting their own being.

Wherefore, if the structures, functioning and surroundings of an economic system are such as to compromise human dignity, in so far as men unfold their proper activity in it, or if it systematically blunts in them the sense of responsibility or constitutes in any way an impediment to the expression of their personal initiative, such an economic system is unjust, even if, by hypothesis, the wealth produced through it reaches a high standard and this wealth is distributed according to the criteria of justice and equity.

Confirmation of Directive

It is not possible to spell out in particular that structure of an economic system which is more in conformity with the dignity of man and more suitable to developing in him a sense of responsibility. Nevertheless, Our predecessor, Pius XII, opportunely delineates this directive as follows:

"The small and average sized undertakings in agriculture, in the arts and crafts, in commerce and industry, should be safeguarded and fostered by granting them the benefits of larger firms by means of cooperative union; while in the large concerns there should be the possibility of moderating the contract of work by one of partnership."[30]

Artisan and Cooperative Enterprises

The artisan enterprise and the farm enterprise of family size, as also the cooperative enterprise that serves likewise as an element of integration of the two, are to be preserved and encouraged in keeping with the common good and within the limits of technical possibilities.

We shall return shortly to the topic of the farm enterprise of family size. Here We think it appropriate to underscore the importance of the artisan and cooperative enterprises.

Above all, it is necessary to emphasize that the two undertakings in order to be effective must constantly adapt themselves in their structure, function and output to ever new situations created by the advance of science and technology, as also by the changing demands and preferences of the consumer. This adaptation must be first of all effected by the craftsmen themselves and the members of cooperatives.

To accomplish this the two groups must have a good training, both technically and humanly, and they must be organized professionally. Further, it is imperative that appropriate economic measures be taken by the government, especially regarding their formation, taxation, credit and social security.

Moreover, the measures taken by public agencies on behalf of craftsmen and members of cooperatives are also justified by the fact that these two categories of citizens uphold true human values and contribute to the advance of civilization.

For these reasons, We paternally invite Our beloved sons, artisans and members of cooperatives throughout the world, to realize the dignity of their profession and their substantial contribution, so that they may keep alert their sense of responsibility and spirit of cooperation in the national communities, and that their desire to work with dedication and originality ever abide.

Participation of Workers

Further, following up the line of thought drawn by Our predecessors, We also hold as justifiable the desire of employees to participate in the activity of the enterprises to which they belong as workers. It is not feasible to define "a priori" the manner and degrees of such participation, since the workers are the ones who are in touch with the specific conditions prevailing in every enterprise — conditions that can vary from one to another and are frequently subject to quick and substantial changes.

But We think it fitting to call attention to the fact that the problem of the participation of the workers is an ever present one, whether the enterprise is private or public. At any rate, every effort should be made that the enterprise become a community of persons in the dealings, activities and standing of all its members.

Good Relations

This demands that the relations between the employers and directors on the one hand, and the employees on the other, be marked by appreciation, understanding, a loyal and active cooperation and devotion to an undertaking common to both, and that the work be considered and carried out by all the members of the enterprise, not merely as a source of income, but also as the fulfillment of a duty and the rendering of a service.

This also means that the workers may have their say in, and may make their contribution to, the efficient running and development of the enterprise. Our predecessor, Pius XII, remarked that "the economic and social function which every man aspires to fulfill, demands that the carrying on of the activity of each one is not completely subjected to the will of others."[31]

A humane view of the enterprise ought undoubtedly to safeguard the authority and necessary efficiency of the unity of direction, but it must not reduce its daily coworkers to the level of simple and silent performers who are without any possibility of bringing to bear their

experience and entirely passive in regard to decisions that regulate their activity.

Historic Development

Finally, attention is to be called to the fact that the exercise of responsibility on the part of the workers in productive units not only corresponds to the lawful demands inherent in human nature, but is also in conformity with the historic development in the economic, social and political fields.

Unfortunately, as We have already noted and as will later be seen more fully, there are numerous economic and social inequalities which in our time are opposed to justice and humanity and deep rooted errors that pervade the activity, purposes, structures and working of the economic world.

But it is an undeniable fact that the productive systems, thanks to the impulse deriving from scientific and technical advance, are today becoming more modern and efficient at a far more rapid rate than in the past. This demands of workers greater abilities and professional qualifications. At the same time and as a consequence, they are given greater means and more free time for being instructed and brought up to date, for acquiring culture and for receiving moral as well as religious formation.

More Time for Training

Thus there can also be affected a longer period for the basic instructions, as well as for the professional training, of new generations.

Thus is created a humane environment that encourages the working classes to assume greater responsibility within enterprises, while at the same time political communities become ever more aware that all citizens feel responsible for bringing about the common good in all spheres of life.

Workers' Participation at All Levels

Modern times have seen a broad development of associations of workers for the specific purpose of cooperation, in particular by means of collective bargaining, and the general recognition of such associations in the juridical codes of various countries and on an international scale. But We cannot fail to emphasize how timely and imperative is it that the workers exert their influence, and effectively so, beyond the limits of the individual productive units and at every level.

The reason is that individual productive units, regardless how extensive or how very efficient they may be, form a vital part of the economic and social complexity of the respective political communities and are determined by it.

But it is not the decisions made within the individual productive units which are those that have the greatest bearing. Instead it is those made by public authorities or by institutions that act on a worldwide, regional or national scale in regard to some economic sector or category of production. Hence the appropriateness or imperativeness that among such authorities or institutions, besides the holders of capital or the representatives of their interests, the workers also or those who represent their rights, demands and aspirations should have a say.

Our affectionate thought and Our paternal encouragement goes out to the professional groups and to the associations of workers of Christian inspiration existing and working on more than one continent, which in the midst of many and frequently grave difficulties have been able and are continuing to strive for the effective promotion of interests of the working classes and for their material and moral improvement, both within a single political unit as well as on a worldwide scale.

It is with satisfaction that We believe it Our duty to underscore the fact that their work is to be gauged not only by its direct results and by those which are immediately observable, but also by its positive reaction on an economic and social order marked by justice and humanity, effected throughout the labor world, where it spreads the principles of correct orientation and supplies the impulse of Christian renovation.

We believe further that one must regard in the same way the work performed with true Christian spirit by Our beloved sons in other professional groups and associations of workers which take their inspiration from natural principles of dealing with each other and are respectful of the freedom of conscience.

We are always happy to express heartfelt appreciation to the International Labor Organization which for decades has been making its effective and precious contribution to the establishment in the world of an economic and social order marked by justice and humanity, where also the lawful demands of the workers are given expression.

Private Property

Changed Conditions

During these last decades, as is known, the difference has been growing more acute between the ownership of productive goods and the responsibility of those managing the larger economic entities. We know that this brings about problems hard to control by the public authorities in order to make certain that the aims pursued by the directors of large companies, especially of those that have greater effect on the entire economic life of a political community, are not contrary to the demands of the common good. It brings about problems which, as experience shows, arise regardless whether the capital that makes possible the vast undertakings belongs to private citizens or to public corporations.

It is also true that there are many citizens today — and their number is on the increase — who through belonging to insurance groups or social security, have reason to face the future with serenity, a serenity that formerly derived from the properties they inherited, however modest.

Finally, it is noted that today men strive to acquire professional training rather than to become owners of property, and that they have greater confidence in income derived from work or rights founded on work rather than in income derived from capital or rights founded on capital.

Moreover, this is in conformity with the preeminent position of work, as the immediate expression of the individual against capital, a good by nature instrumental. Hence such a view of work may be considered a step forward in the process of human civilization.

The aspects revealed by the economic world, which We have just alluded to, have certainly contributed to spreading the doubt that a principle of the economic and social order consistently taught by our predecessors has diminished or lost its importance, namely the principle of the natural right of private ownership, inclusive of productive goods.

Right of Private Ownership

There is no reason for such a doubt to persist. The right of private ownership of goods, inclusive of productive goods, has a permanent validity, precisely because it is a natural right founded on the ontological and finalistic priority of individual human beings as compared with society.

Moreover, it would be useless to insist on free and personal initiative in the economic field, if the same initiative were not permitted to dispose freely of the means indispensable to its achievement. Further, history and experience testify that in those political regimes which do not recognize the rights of private ownership of goods, productive goods included, the fundamental manifestations of freedom are suppressed or stifled. Hence one may justifiably conclude that they find in such a right both a guarantee and an incentive.

Explanation

This is an explanation of the fact that socio-political movements which strive to reconcile justice and liberty in society were until recently clearly opposed to the private ownership of productive goods but are now — more fully enlightened concerning actual social conditions — reconsidering their own stand and are taking an essentially positive attitude in regard to that right.

Accordingly, We make Our own the insistence of Our predecessor Pius XII: "In defending the principle of private property the Church is striving after an important ethico-social end. She does not intend merely to uphold the present condition of things as if it were an expression of the Divine Will or to protect on principle the rich and plutocrats against the poor and indigent. . . The Church rather aims at securing that the institution of private property be such as it should be according to the plan of Divine Wisdom and the dispositions of nature."[32]

And thus may the natural right be the guarantee of the essential freedom of the individual and at the same time an indispensable element in the social order.

Increase of Income

Further, We have observed today in many political communities that economic systems are rapidly increasing their productive efficiency. With this increase of income, justice and fairness demand, as We have already seen, that remuneration for work be increased within the limits allowed by the common good. This allows the workers more easily to save and thus acquire their own property.

Hence it is incomprehensible how the innate character of a right can be called into question when it has as its main source the fruitfulness of work and is continually fomented by the same thing, when it is a right that constitutes an apt means to assert one's personality and to exercise responsibility in every field and an element of solidity and of security for family life and of the peaceful and orderly development of society.

Effective Distribution

It is not enough to assert the natural character of the right of private property, including productive property, but the effective distribution among all social classes is also to be insisted upon.

As Our predecessor Pius XII states: "Ordinarily, as a natural basis for living, the right to the use of the goods of the earth, to which corresponds the fundamental obligation of granting private property to all if possible,"[33] while among the demands arising from the moral dignity of work, is also the one that includes "the conservation and perfection of a social order which makes possible a secure, even if modest, property to all classes of the people."[34]

The distribution of property ought to be championed and effected in times such as ours in which, as has been noted, the economic systems of an increasing number of political communities are in the process of rapid development.

While making use of various technical devices which have proved effective, these communities find it easy to promote the enterprises and carry out an economic and social policy that favors and facilitates an increased distribution of private ownership and of durable consumer goods, of homes, of farms, of one's own equipment in artisan enterprises and farms of family size, as often experienced in some political communities that have developed economically and progressed socially.

Public Property

What has been set forth above does not exclude, as is obvious, that state and other public agencies should also lawfully possess productive goods as property, especially when they "carry with them an opportunity too great to be left to private individuals without injury to the community at large."[35]

In modern times there is a tendency toward a progressive taking over of property whose ownership is vested in the state or other agencies of public authority. This fact finds its explanation in the ever widening activity which the common good requires the public authorities to carry on.

But in the present matter the principle of subsidiarity stated above is also to be followed. Accordingly, the state and other agencies of public law should not extend their ownership except where motives of the evident and real necessity of the common good require it. And they should not extend it for the purpose of reducing or, much less, of abolishing private property.

Nor is one to forget that the enterprises of an economic nature of the state and other agencies of public law are to be entrusted to those who unite in themselves a specific solid ability, spotless honesty and a keen sense of responsibility toward their country.

Further, their behavior and activity are to be subject to a wise and constant inspection in order to prevent, among other things, the formation within the very organization of the state of centers of economic power that would redound to the detriment of its "raison d'etre," that is, the good of the community.

Social Function of Private Property

Another doctrinal point constantly set forth by Our predecessors is that a social function is intrinsically linked with the right of private property. As a matter of fact, according to the plan of Creation, the goods of the earth are above all destined for the worthy support of all human beings, as Our predecessor Leo XIII in his encyclical "Rerum Novarum" expresses so wisely:

"Whoever has received from the Divine Bounty a large share of blessings, whether they be external or corporal, or gifts of the mind, has received them for the purpose of using them for perfecting his own nature and, at the same time, that he may employ them as the minister of God's Providence for the benefit of others. 'He that hath a talent,' says St. Gregory the Great, 'let him see that he hideth is not; he that hath abundance, let him arouse himself to mercy and generosity; he that hath art and skill, let him do his best to share the use and utility thereof with his neighbor.' "[36]

Today the state as well as the agencies of public law have extended and are continuing to extend the sphere of their activity and initiative. But not for that reason has the "raison d'etre" of the social function of private property diminished, as some wrongly tend to believe, for the social function derives from the very nature of the right of property.

Further, there is always a wide range of tragic conditions and needs that demand tact, yet are nonetheles urgent, and which the official means of public agencies cannot reach or at any rate cannot assist. Hence there ever remains a vast sphere for the human sympathy and Christian charity of individuals.

Group Efforts

Finally, it has also been noted that the numerous efforts of individuals or of groups are often more effective in promoting spiritual values than the activity of public agencies.

We should like to note at this point that in the Gospel the right of private ownership of goods is regarded as lawful. But at the same time, the Divine Master frequently extends to the rich the insistent invitation to convert their material goods into spiritual ones by conferring them on the needy.

He invites them to convert their material goods into spiritual goods which the thief cannot steal nor the moth nor rust destroy and which will be found increased in the eternal store houses of the Heavenly Father: "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."[37]

And the Lord will consider as given or refused to Himself the charity given or refused to the needy. "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethern, you did it to me."[38]

Part III

New Aspects of the Social Question

The evolution of historical situations brings into ever greater relief how the exigencies of justice and equity not only have a bearing on the relations between dependent workingmen and contractors or employers, but also concern the relations between different economic sectors, between areas economically more developed and those economically less developed within individual political communities and on the world plane, the relations between countries with a different degree of economic-social development.

Exodus from Rural Areas

On the world plane it does not seem that the agricultural-rural population, in absolute terms, has decreased; But it is undeniable that an exodus of farm-rural peoples to urban agglomerations or centers is taking place—an exodus that is taking place in almost all countries and that sometimes assumes massive proportions, creating complex human problems difficult to solve.

We know that as an economy develops, the labor forces engaged in agriculture decreases, while the percentage of the labor force employed in industry and in the area of services rises. Nevertheless, We think that the movement of the population from the farm area to other productive sectors, besides the objective reasons of

economic development, is often due to multiple factors, among which have been enumerated the desire to escape from surroundings considered as shut in and devoid of prospects; the longing for novelty and adventure that has taken hold of the present generation; the attraction of easily-gained riches; the mirage of living in greater freedom and enjoying means and facilities that urban agglomerations and centers offer.

But We also hold as beyond doubt that one of the forces behind this exodus is the fact that the farming sector, almost everywhere, is a depressed area, whether as regards the index of productivity of the labor force or as regards the standard of living of agricultural rural populations.

Thus, a fundamental problem that arises in practically all political communities is the following: How to proceed in order that the disproportion in productive efficiency between the agricultural sector on the one hand and, on the other, the industrial sector and that of services be reduced; in order that the standard of living of the farm-rural population be as close as possible to the standard of living of city people, who draw their resources from the industrial sector and from that of the service sector; in order that the tillers of the soil may not be possessed of an inferiority complex, but rather be persuaded that even in agriculture they can develop their personality through their toil and look forward to the future with confidence.

It seems to Us opportune, therefore, to indicate certain directives that can contribute to a solution of the problem, directives which we believe have value whatever may be the historical environment in which one acts, on condition, obviously, that they be applied in the manner and to the degree the surroundings allow or suggest or demand.

Equalization of Essential Public Services

It is above all indispensable that great care be taken, especially by the public authorities to ensure that the essential services in country areas be suitably developed: good roads, transportation, means of communication, drinking water, housing, health services, elementary education and technical and professional training, conditions suitable for the practice of religion, means of recreation and means to ensure that there should be a good supply of those products which enable the country home to be well equipped and to be run on modern lines.

Whenever such services, necessary today for a becoming standard of living, are lacking in country areas, economic development and social progress become almost impossible or develop too slowly. And the consequence of this is that the flow of population away from the country becomes almost impossible to check and difficult to control.

Development of Economic System

It is also necessary that the economic development of the political communities should take effect in a gradual way and maintain a harmonious balance between all the sectors of production. That is to say, it is necessary that in cultivating the soil there should be put into practice innovations concerning methods of production. There should be a choice of the type of agriculture and enterprise that the economic system considered as a whole allows or requires. And these should be put into practice, as far as possible, in a degree proportionate to that carried out in the industrial and service sectors.

In this way, agriculture absorbs a larger amount of industrial goods and demands a higher quality of services. In turn, it offers to the other two fields and to the whole community the products which best meet, in quality and quantity, the needs of the consumer, contributing to the stability of the purchasing power of money, a very positive factor in the orderly development of the entire economic system.

In such a way We believe that it would also prove less difficult, both in areas which the population is leaving as well as in those to which they are flocking, to control the movement of the labor force, set free by the progressive modernization of agriculture. It would be less difficult to provide the labor force with the professional training that will enable its members to fit profitably into the other sectors of production and with the economic aid and preparation and spiritual assistance that will bring about their integration into society.

Appropriate Political Economy

To obtain an economic development that preserves a harmonious balance among all the sectors of production, a prudent political economy in the area of agriculture is also required, a political economy that takes into account taxation, credit, social insurance, price protection, the fostering of integrating industries and the adjustment of the structures of enterprises.

Taxation

The fundamental principle in a system of taxation based on justice and equity is that the burdens should be proportionate to the capacity of the people to contribute. But the common good also requires that in the assessment of taxes, it must be born in mind that in the sector of agriculture the returns develop more slowly and are exposed to greater risks in their production, and that there is greater difficulty in obtaining the capital necessary to increase them.

Capital at Suitable Interest

For the reasons mentioned above, the possessors of capital have little inclination to make investments in this sector. They are more inclined to invest in the other sector instead.

For the same reason agricultural investments cannot yield a high rate of interest. Nor can agriculture as a rule earn large enough profits to furnish the capital necessary for its own development and the normal exercise of its afairs. It is therefore necessary, for reasons of the common good, to evolve a special credit policy and to create credit institutes which will guarantee to agriculture such capital at a rate of interest on suitable terms.

Insurance and Social Security

In agriculture the existence of two forms of insurance may be indispensable: one is concerned with agricultural products, the other with the labor force and their families.

Because the return per head is generally less in agriculture than in the sectors of industry and of services, it would not be in accordance with the standards of social justice and equity to set up systems of social insurance or of social security in which the allowances accorded to the forces of agricultural labor and of the individual families were substantially lower than those guaranteed to the sectors of industry and of services.

We consider that social policy must aim at guaranteeing that the insurance allowances made to the people should not be materially different no matter in what economic sector they work or the income on which they live.

The systems of social insurance and social security can contribute efficaciously to a redistribution of the overall income of the political community according to the standards of justice and equity. It can therefore be considered as one of the instruments for restoring the balance in the standards of living in the different categories of the people.

Price Protection

Given the nature of agricultural production it is necessary that an effective system of regulation should be enforced to protect prices, making use to this end of the numerous expedients which present-day economic techniques can offer. It is very desirable that such regulation should be primarily the work of the interested parties.

On this subject it must not be forgotten that the price of agricultural produce represents rather the reward of labor than remuneration of capital.

Pope Pius XI in the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" rightly observes that " a reasonable relationship between different wages here enters into consideration." But he immediately adds, "intimately connected with this is a reasonable relationship between the prices obtained for the products of the various economic groups: agrarian, industrial, etc."[39]

While it is true that farm produce is destined above all to satisfy the primary needs of man, and hence its price should be within the means of all consumers, still this cannot be used as an argument to compel a part of the citizens to a permanent state of economic and social inferiority by depriving them of the indispensable purchasing power in keeping with a man's dignity, for this would be diametrically opposed to the common good.

Integration of Farm Income

It is also opportune to promote in agricultural regions the industries and services pertaining to the preservation, processing and transportation of farm products.

It is further desirable that in these regions undertakings in respect to other economic sectors and other professional activities be developed, so that farmers can complete their income in the surroundings where they live and work.

Adjustment of Structure of Farming Enterprises

It is not possible to determine a priori what the structure of farm life should be, because of the diversity of the rural conditions in each political community, not to mention the immense difference obtaining between the nations of the world.

But if we hold to a human and Christian concept of man and the family, we are forced to consider as an ideal that community of persons operating on internal relations and whose structure is formed according to the demands of justice and the principles stated above, and still more, enterprises of family size. With these in mind we should exert every effort to realize one or the other, as far as circumstances permit.

But it is necessary to call attention to the fact that the enterprise of family size requires economic conditions which can insure sufficient income to enable the family to live in decent comfort.

To attain this end, it seems necessary not only that farmers be given up-to-date instructions on the latest methods of cultivation and be technically assisted in their profession, but it is also indispensable that they form a flourishing system of cooperative undertakings, be organized professionally and participate in public life, not only in administrative institutions, but also in political movements.

Rural Workers Must Participate

We are of the opinion that rural workers must take an active part in their own economic advancement, social progress and cultural betterment.

They can easily see how noble is their work either because they live out their lives in the majestic temple of creation or because their work often concerns the life of plants and animals, a life that is inexhaustible in its expression, inflexible in its laws, rich in allusions to God, the Creator and Provider, or because they produce food necessary to nourish the human family and furnish an increasing number of raw materials for industry.

Furthermore, it is a work which carries with it the dignity of a profession which is marked by its manifold relationship with machines, chemistry, and biology—relationships in continual development because of the repercussions of scientific and technical progress on the farm.

It is also a work characterized by a moral dimension proper to itself, for it demands capacity for orientation and adaptation, patience in its many hours of waiting, a sense of responsibility, a spirit of perseverance and of enterprise.

Solidarity and Cooperation

We should like to recall to your minds also that in agriculture, as in other sectors of production, association is a vital need today, the more so as this sector has as its base the family size enterprise.

Rural workers should feel a sense of solidarity one with another, and should unite to form cooperatives and professional associations, which are both necessary if they are to benefit from scientific and technical progress in methods of production, if they are to contribute in an efficicacious manner to defend the prices of their products, if they are to attain an equal footing with other economical professional classes who are likewise usually organized.

They need to organize to have a voice, for today almost nobody hears, much less pays attention to, isolated voices.

Awareness of Common Good

However, rural workers (as workers in every other productive sector) must be governed in using their various rights and interests with organizations by moral and juridical principles. They must try to reconcile their rights and interests with those of other classes of workers, and even subordinate one to the other if the common good demands it.

The rural workers engaged in improving the condition of the whole agricultural world can legitimately demand that their efforts be seconded and complemented by the public authorities when they show themselves aware of the common good and contribute to its realization.

At this point, it is with pleasure that We express Our satisfaction with Our sons in various parts of the world who are actively engaged in cooperatives, in professional groups and in worker movements with a view to raising the economic and social standards of rural workers.

Vocation and Mission

In the work on the farm the human personality finds numerous incentives for self-expression, for self-development, for enrichment and for growth even in regard to spiritual values. Therefore, it is a work which is conceived and lived both as a vocation and as a mission.

It can be considered as an answer to God's call to actuate His providential plan in history. It may also be considered as a noble undertaking to elevate oneself and others and as a contribution to human civilization.

Actions to Encourage Progress and Bring Equality to Under-Developed Areas

Among citizens of the same political community there often exists a marked economic and social inequality due for the most part to the fact that some live and work in areas that are economically more developed, while others live and work in areas that are economically underdeveloped. When this situation obtains, justice and equity demand that the public authorities should try to eliminate or reduce such inequality.

To accomplish this end the public authorities should see to it that in the underdeveloped areas there exist assured essential public services, which should be of the kind and extent suggested or required by the surroundings and which should usually correspond to the average standard of life that obtains in the national community. Furthermore, it is necessary to develop a suitable economic and social policy regarding the supply of labor and the dislocation of population, wages, taxes, interest and investments, with special attention to expanding industries. In short, there should be a policy capable of promoting complete employment of the labor force, of stimulating enterprising initiative and of exploiting the natural resources of the place.

But governmental action along these lines must always be justified by the demands of the common good, which requires that all three areas of production—agriculture, industry, and public services—be developed gradually, simultaneously and harmoniously in order to obtain unity on the national level. Special effort must be made that the citizens of the less developed regions take an active part, insofar as circumstances allow, in their economic betterment.

Finally, it is necessary to remember that even private enterprise must contribute to effecting an economic and social balance among the different zones of the same country. And indeed public authorities, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, must encourage and help private enterprise, entrusting to it, as far as efficiently possible, the continuation of the economic development.

Elimination or Reduction of Unbalance Between Land and Population

It is not out of place to remark here that there are not a few countries where a gross disproportion between land and population exists. In some countries there is a scarcity of population and tillable land abounds. In others, on the other hand, the population is large, while arable land is scarce.

Furthermore, there are some countries where, in spite of rich natural resources, not enough food is produced to feed the population because of primitive methods of agriculture. On the other hand, in some countries, on account of modern methods of agriculture, food surpluses have become an economic problem.

It is obvious that the solidarity of the human race and Christian brotherhood demand that an active and manifold cooperation be established among the peoples of the world. They demand a cooperation which permits and encourages the movement of goods, capital and men with a view to eliminating or reducing the above mentioned unbalance. Later on, We shall treat this point in more detail.

Here, however, We should like to express Our sincere appreciation for the highly beneficial work the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (F.A.O.) is undertaking to establish fruitful accord among nations, to promote the modernization of agriculture, especially in countries in the process of development, and to alleviate the suffering of hunger-stricken peoples.

Demands of Justice in Relationship Between Nations Differing in Economic Development

Probably the most difficult problem of the modern world concerns the relationship between political communities that are economically advanced and those in the process of development. The standard of living is high in the former, while in the latter countries poverty, and in some cases extreme poverty, exists.

The solidarity which binds all men and makes them members of the same family requires political communities enjoying an abundance of material goods not to remain indifferent to those political communities whose citizens suffer from poverty, misery, and hunger and who lack even the elementary rights of the human person. This is particularly true since, given the growing interdependence among the peoples of the earth, it is not possible to preserve lasting peace if glaring economic and social inequality among them persists.

Mindful of Our role of Universal Father, We feel obliged to stress solemnly what We have stated in another connection: "We are all equally responsible for the undernourished peoples.[40] Therefore, it is necessary to educate one's conscience to the sense of responsibility which weighs upon each and everyone, especially upon those who are more blessed with this world's goods."[41]

It is obvious that the obligation to help those who find themselves in want and misery, which the Church has always taught, should be felt more strongly by Catholics, who find a most noble motive in the fact that we are all members of Christ's Mystical Body. John, the Apostle, said: "In this we have known the charity of God, because He hath laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him: How doth the charity of God abide in him?"[42]

We therefore see with satisfaction that those political communities enjoying high economic standards are providing assistance to political communities in the process of economic development in order that they may succeed in raising their standards of living.

Emergency Assistance

There are countries which produce consumer goods and especially farm products in excess, while in other countries large segments of the population suffer from misery and hunger. Justice and humanity demand that the former come to the aid of the latter. To destroy or to squander goods that other people need in order to live is to offend against justice and humanity.

While it is true that to produce goods, especially agricultural products, in excess of the needs of the political community can cause economic harm to a certain portion of the population, this is not a motive for exonerating oneself from the obligation of extending emergency aid to the indigent and hungry. Rather, all ingenuity should be used to contain the negative effects deriving from surplus goods, or at least to make the entire population equally share the burden.

Scientific, Technical and Financial Cooperation

Emergency aid, although a duty imposed by humanity and justice, is not enough to eliminate or even to reduce the causes which in not a few political communities bring about a permanent state of want, misery and hunger. These causes flow, for the most part, from the primitiveness or backwardness of their economic systems.

And this cannot be remedied except by means of varied forms of cooperation directed to making these citizens acquire new outlooks, professional qualifications and scientific and technical competence. This cooperation must also consist of putting at their disposal the necessary capital to start and to speed up their economic development with the help of modern methods.

We are well aware that in recent years the realization has grown and matured that efforts should be made to favor the economic development and social progress in the countries which face the greatest difficulties.

World and regional organizations, individual states, foundations and private societies offer to the above mentioned countries, in an increasing degree, their own technical cooperation in all productive spheres. And they multiply facilities for thousands of young people to study in the universities of the more developed countries and to acquire an up-to-date scientific, technical and professional formation.

Meanwhile world banking institutes, single states and private persons furnish capital and give life, or help to give life, to a never richer network of economic enterprises in the countries on the way to development. We are happy to profit by the present occasion to express Our sincere appreciation of such richly fruitful works.

But We cannot excuse Ourselves from pointing out that the scientific, technical and economic cooperation between the economically developed political communities and those just beginning or on the way to development needs to be increased beyond the present level. And it is Our hope that such a development will characterize their dealings during the next decades.

On this matter We consider some reflections and warnings opportune.

Avoiding Errors of Past

Wisdom demands that the political communities which are themselves in the initial stage or a little advanced in their economic development keep before their eyes the actual experiences of the already developed political communities.

More and better production corresponds to a rational need and is also an absolute necessity. However, it is no less necessary and conformable to justice that the riches produced come to be equally distributed among all members of the political community. Hence an effort should be made to see that social progress proceeds at the same pace as economic development. This means that it be actuated, as far as possible, gradually and harmoniously in all productive sectors, in those of agriculture, industry, and services.

Respect for Characteristics of Communities

The political communities on the way toward economic development generally present their own unmistakable individuality, due either to their resources and the specific character of their own natural environment, or to their traditions, frequently abounding in human values, or to the typical quality of their own members.

The economically developed political communities, when lending their help, must recognize and respect this individuality and overcome the temptation to impose themselves by means of these works upon the community in the course of economic development.

Disinterested Work

But the bigger temptation with which the economically developed political communities have to struggle is the temptation to profit from their technical and financial cooperation so as to influence the political situation of the less developed countries with a view to bringing about plans of world domination.

If this takes place, it must be explicitly declared that it would be a new form of colonialism which however cleverly disguised, would not for all that be less blameworthy than that from which many peoples have recently escaped and which would influence negatively their international relations, constituting a menace and danger to world peace.

And it is, therefore, indispensable and corresponds to the need of justice that the above mentioned technical and financial aid be given in sincere political disinterestedness, for the purpose of putting those communities on the way to economic development in a position to realize their own proper economic and social growth.

In such a way a precious contribution to the formation of a world community would be made, a community in which all members are subjects conscious of their own duties and rights, working on a basis of equality for the bringing about of the universal common good.

Respect for Hierarchy of Values

Scientific and technical progress, economic development and the betterment of living conditions are certainly positive elements in a civilization. But we must remember that they are not nor can they be considered the supreme values, in comparison with which they are seen to be essentially instrumental in character.

It is with sadness that We point out that in the economically developed countries there are not a few persons in whom the consciousness of the hierarchy of values is weakened, dead or confused. That is, there are not a few persons in whom the spiritual values are neglected, forgotten and denied, while the progress of the sciences and technology, economic development and the material well-being are often fostered and proposed as the preeminent, and even elevated to the unique, reason of life.

This constitutes an insidious poison, and one of the most dangerous, in the work which the economically developed peoples can give to those on the way to development, those in whom ancient tradition has quite often preserved a living and operating consciousness of some of the most important human values.

To undermine this consciousness is essentially immoral. One must respect it and, where possible, clarify and develop it so that it will remain what it is: a foundation for true civilization.

The Contribution of the Church

The Church, as is known, is universal by divine right. And she is universal historically from the fact that she is present, or strives to be so, among all peoples.

The entrance of the Church among a people has always brought positive reactions to the social and economic fields, as history and experience show. The reason is that people on becoming Christian cannot but feel obliged to improve the institutions and the environment in the temporal order, whether to prevent these doing harm to the dignity of man or to eliminate or reduce the obstacles to the good and multiply the incentives and invitations to it.

In Life of People

Moreover, the Church, entering the life of the people, is not nor does she consider herself to be an institution which is imposed from outside. This is due to the fact that her presence is brought about by the rebirth or resurrection of each person in Christ. And he who is reborn or rises again in Christ never feels himself constrained from without. Indeed, he feels himself liberated in the deepest part of his being and thus open towards God. And whatever in him is of worth, whatever be its nature, is reaffirmed and ennobled.

"The Church of Jesus Christ," as Our predecessor Pius XII wisely observes, "is the repository of His wisdom; she is certainly too wise to discourage or belittle those peculiarities and differences which mark out one nation from another. It is quite legitimate for nations to treat those differences as a sacred inheritance and guard them at all costs. The Church aims at unity, a unity determined and kept alive by the supernatural love which should be actuating everybody. She does not aim at a uniformity which would only be external in its effects and would cramp the natural tendencies of the nations concerned.

Nations Differ

Every nation has its own genius, its own qualities, springing from the hidden roots of its being. The wise development, the encouragement within limits, of that genius, those qualities, does no harm. And if a nation cares to take precautions, to lay down rules, for that end, it has the Church's approval. She is mother enough to befriend such projects with her prayers."[43]

We notice with profound satisfaction how today also, the Catholic citizens of the countries moving towards economic development are not, as a rule, second to any in taking their part in the effort which their own countries are making to develop and raise themselves in the economic and social fields."

Furthermore, Catholic citizens of the economically developed countries are multiplying their efforts to help and make more fruitful the work being done for the communities still developing economically. Worthy of special consideration is the varied assistance that they increasingly give to students from the countries of Africa and Asia who are scattered throughout the universities of Europe and America, and the preparation of persons trained to go to the less developed countries in order to engage in technical and professional activity.

To these, Our beloved sons, who in every continent show forth the perennial vitality of the Church in promoting genuine progress and in giving life to civilization, We wish to join Our kind and paternal word of appreciation and encouragement.

Population Increase and Economic Development

In recent years the problem concerning the relationship between population increase, economic development and the availability of the means of sustenance, whether on a world plane or as it confronts the economically developing political communities, is very much to the fore again.

On a world-wide scale, some observe that according to sufficiently reliable statistics, in a few decades the human family will reach a quite high figure, while economic development will proceed at a slower rate. From this they deduce that, if nothing is done in time to check the population flow, the lack of balance between the population and the food supply in the not too distant future will make itself felt acutely.

Insofar as this affects the political communities which are developing economically, still relying on statistical data, it is clear that the rapid spread of hygienic measures and of appropriate medical remedies will greatly reduce the death rate, especially among infants, while the birth rate, which in such countries is usually high, tends to remain more or less constant, at least for a considerable period of time.

Therefore, the excess of births over deaths will notably increase, while the productive efficiency of the respective economic systems will not increase proportionately. Accordingly, an improvement in the standards of living in these developing political communities is impossible. Indeed it is inevitable that things will get worse. Hence, to avoid a situation which will result in extreme hardship, there are those who would have recourse to drastic measures of birth control or prevention.

Terms of the Problem

To tell the truth, considered on a world scale, the relationship between the population increase on the one hand and the economic development and availability of food supplies on the other, does not seem—at least for the moment and in the near future—to create a difficulty. In every case the elements from which one can draw sure conclusions are too uncertain and changeable.

Besides, God in His goodness and wisdom has diffused in nature inexhaustible resources and has given to man the intelligence and genius to create fit instruments to master it and to turn it to satisfy the needs and demands of life.

Hence, the real solution of the problem is not to be found in expedients that offend the moral order established by God and which injure the very origin of human life, but in a renewed scientific and technical effort on the part of man to deepen and extend his dominion over nature. The progress of science and technology, already realized, opens up in this direction limitless horizons.

Serious Problems

We realize that in certain areas and in the political communities of developing economies really serious problems and difficulties can and do present themselves, due to a deficient economic and social organization which does not offer living conditions proportionate to the rate of population increase and also to the fact that solidarity among peoples is not operative to a sufficient degree.

But even in such a hypothesis, We must immediately and clearly state that these problems must not be confronted and these difficulties are not to be overcome by having recourse to methods and means which are unworthy of man and which find their explanation only in an utterly materialistic concept of man himself and of his life.

True Solution

The true solution is found only in economic development and in social progress which respects and promotes true human values, individual and social. It is to be found only in economic development and social progress that is brought about in a moral atmosphere, conformable to the dignity of man and to the immense value possessed by the life of a single human being, and in cooperation on a world scale that permits and favors interchange of useful knowledge, of capital and of manpower.

Respect for Laws of Life

We must solemnly proclaim that human life is transmitted by means of the family, the family founded on marriage, one and indissoluble, raised for Christians to the dignity of a sacrament. The transmission of human life is entrusted by nature to a personal and conscious act and, as such, is subject to the all wise laws of God, laws which are inviolable and immutable and which are to be recognized and observed. Therefore, it is not permissable to use means and follow methods that can be licit for the transmission of plant or animal life.

Human life is sacred. From its very inception, the creative action of God is directly operative. By violating His laws, the Divine Majesty is offended, the individuals

themselves and humanity degraded and likewise the community of which they are members is enfeebled.

Education Toward Responsibility

It is of the greatest importance that the new generations be brought up with an adequate cultural as well as religious formation. It is the duty and right of parents to obtain this formation which leads to a profound sense of responsibility in all the expressions of their life and therefore also in regard to the forming of a family and to the procreation and education of children.

These ought to be formed in a life of Faith and great trust in Divine Providence in order to be ready to undergo fatigue and sacrifices in the fulfillment of a mission so noble and often so arduous as is the cooperation with God in the transmission of human life and the education of offspring. For such education no institution provides so many efficacious resources as the Church which, even for this reason, has the right to full liberty to fulfill her mission.

In the Service of Life

Genesis relates how God imposed on the first human beings two commands: that of transmitting life: "Increase and multiply,"[44] and that of dominating nature: "Fill the earth and subdue it."[45] These commands complement each other.

Certainly the Divine command to dominate nature is not aimed at destructive purposes. Instead it is for the service of life.

We point out with sadness one of the most disturbing contradictions by which Our epoch is tormented and by which it is being consumed, namely that, while on the one hand are brought out in strong relief situations of want, and the spectre of misery and hunger haunts us; on the other hand scientific discoveries, technical inventions and economic resources are being used, often extensively, to provide terrible instruments of ruin and death.

A provident God grants sufficient means to the human race to solve in dignified fashion even the many and delicate problems attendant upon the transmission of life. But these problems can become difficult of solution or even insoluble because man, led astray in mind or perverted in will, turns to such means as are opposed to reason and hence he seeks ends that do not answer man's social nature or the plans of Providence.

Cooperation on a World Scale

World Dimensions of Every Important Problem

The progress of science and technology in all aspects of life multiply and increase the relationships between political communities and hence render their interdependence ever more profound and vital.

As a result, it can be said that problems of any importance, whatever their content may be—scientific, technical, economic, social, political or cultural—present today supranational and often worldwide dimensions.

Hence, the different political communities can no longer adequately solve their major problems in their own surroundings and with their own forces, even though they be communities which are notable for the high level and diffusion of their culture, for the number and industriousness of their citizens, for the efficiency of their economic systems and the vastness and the richness of their territories. Political communities react on each other. And it may be said that each succeeds in developing itself by contributing to the development of the other. Hence, understanding and cooperation are so necessary.

Mutual Distrust

One can thus understand how in the minds of individual human beings and among different peoples the conviction of the urgent necessity of mutual understanding and cooperation is becoming ever more widespread. But at the same time, it seems that men, especially those entrusted with greater responsibility, show themselves unable to understand one another. The root of such inability is not to be sought in scientific, technical or economic reasons but in the absence of mutual trust.

Men, and consequently states, fear each other. Each fears that the other harbors plans of conquest and is waiting for the favorable moment to put these plans into effect. Hence, each organizes its own defences and arms itself not for attacking, so it is said, but to deter the potential aggressor against any effective invasion.

As a consequence, vast human energies and gigantic resources are employed for nonconstructive purposes. Meanwhile, in the minds of individual human beings and among peoples there arises and grows a sense of uneasiness and reluctance which lessens the spirit of initiative for works on a broad scale.

Failure to Acknowledge Moral Order

The lack of reciprocal trust finds its explanation in the fact that men, especially the more responsible ones, are inspired in the unfolding of their activity by different or radically opposed concepts of life. Unfortunately, in some of these concepts the existence of the moral order—an order which is transcendant, universal, absolute, equal and binding on all—is not recognized.

Thus, they fail to meet and understand each other fully and openly in the light of one and the same law of justice, admitted and adhered to by all. It is true that the term justice and the phrase "demands of justice" are uttered by the lips of all. However, these utterances take on different and opposite meaning.

Wherefore, the repeated and impassioned appeals to justice and the demands of justice, rather than offering a possibility of meeting or of understanding, increase the confusion, sharpen the contrasts and keep disputes inflamed. In consequence, the belief is spread that to enforce one's rights and pursue one's own interests, no other means are lift than recourse to violence, font of the most serious evils.

The True God, Foundation of the Moral Order

Mutual trust among men and among states cannot begin or increase except by the recognition of and respect for the moral order.

The moral order does not hold except in God. Cut off from God, it disintegrates. Man, in fact, is not only a material organism but is also a spirit endowed with thought and freedom. He demands, therefore, a moral and religious order which bears more than any material value on the directions and solutions it can give to the problems of individual and group life within the national communities and the relationships among them.

It has been claimed that in an era of scientific and technical triumphs, men can construct their civilization without God. But the truth is that these same scientific and technical advances present human problems of a worldwide scope which can be solved only in the light of a sincere and active faith in God, the beginning and end of man in the world.

These truths are confirmed by the ascertainment that the same limitless horizons which are opened up by scientific research help to give birth to the conviction and to develop it that mathematical and scientific notions point out, but do not gather and much less express entirely, the more profound aspects of reality.

The tragic experience that the gigantic forces placed at the disposal of technology can be used for purposes both constructive and destructive makes evident the pressing importance of spiritual values so that scientific and technical progress may preserve its essentially instrumental character with reference to civilization.

Further, the sense of increasing dissatisfaction which spreads among human beings in national communities with a high standard of living destroys the illusion of a hoped for paradise on earth. But at the same time, the consciousness of inviolable and universal rights becomes ever clearer, and ever more forceful is the aspiration for more just and more human relations.

These are all motives which contribute toward making human beings more conscious of their own limitations and toward creating in them a striving for spiritual values. And this cannot but be a happy earnest of a sincere understanding and profitable cooperation.

Part IV

Reconstruction of Social Relationships in Truth, Justice, and Love

Incomplete and Erroneous Ideologies

After all this scientific and technical progress, and even because of it, there remains the problem that the social relationships should be reconstructed in a more human balance both in regard to individual political communities and on a world scale.

In the modern era different ideologies have been devised and spread abroad with this in mind. Some have

been dissolved as clouds by the sun. Some have undergone substantial changes. Others have waned much and are losing still more their attraction on the minds of men. The reason is that they are ideologies which consider only certain and less profound aspects of man.

And this is so because they do not take into consideration certain inevitable human imperfections, such as sickness and suffering, imperfections which even the most advanced economic-social systems cannot eliminate. Then there is the profound and imperishable religious exigence which constantly expresses itself everywhere, even though trampled down by violence or skillfully smothered.

Fundamental Error

In fact, the most fundamental modern error is that of considering the religious demands of the human soul as an expression of feeling or of fantasy, or a product of some contingent event, which should be eliminated as an anachronism and as an obstacle to human progress. Yet by this exigency human beings reveal themselves for what they really are: beings created by God and for God, as St. Augustine cries out: "You made us for Thee, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee."[46]

Sense of Dignity

Moreover, whatever the technical and economic progress, there will be neither justice nor peace in this world until men return to a sense of their dignity as creatures and sons of God, the just and final reason of the being of all reality created by Him. Man separated from God becomes inhuman to himself and to those of his kind, because the orderly relation of society presupposes the orderly relation of one's conscience with God, font of truth, justice and love.

It is true that the persecution of so many of Our dearly beloved brothers and sons, which has been raging for decades in many countries, even those of an ancient Christian civilization, makes ever clearer to Us the dignified superiority of the persecuted and the refined barbarity of the persecutors, so that, if it does not give visible signs of repentence, it induces many to think.

Modern Delusions

But it is always true that the most perniciously typical aspect of the modern era consists in the absurd attempt to reconstruct a solid and fruitful temporal order prescinding from God, the only foundation on which it can endure, and to want to celebrate the greatness of man by drying up the font from which that greatness springs and from which it is nourished, hence restraining and if possible extinguishing man's sighing for God.

Everyday experience continues to witness to the fact, amidst the most bitter delusions and not rarely in terms of blood, that, as stated in the inspired book: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."[47]

Perennial Actuality of Catholic Social Doctrine

The Church is the standard bearer and herald of a way of life which is ever up to date.

The fundamental principle in such a conception is, as is seen from what has thus far been said, that individual human beings are and should be the foundation, the end and the subjects of all the institutions in which social life is carried on, that is individual human souls considered insofar as they are and should be by their nature intrinsically social, and insofar as they are in the plan of Providence, and by their elevation to the supernatural order.

From this fundamental principle which guarantees the sacred dignity of the individual, the teaching office of the Church has made clear, with the cooperation of enlightened priests and laymen, especially during this last century, a social doctrine which points out with clarity the sure way to reconstruct social relationships according to universal criteria based on human nature, the various dimensions of the temporal order and the characteristics of contemporary society and which are hence acceptable to all.

But it is indispensable, today more than ever, that this doctrine be known, assimilated and translated into social reality in the form and manner that the different situations allow and demand. It is a most difficult task, but a most noble one, to the carrying out of which We most warmly invite not only Our brothers and sons scattered through out the world but also all men of good will.

Instruction

We reaffirm strongly that the Christian social doctrine is an integral part of the Christian conception of life.

While We note with satisfaction that in several institutes this doctrine has been taught for some time, we feel urged to exhort that such teaching be extended by regular systematic courses in Catholic schools of every kind, especially in seminaries. It is to be inserted into the religious instruction programs of parishes and of associations of the lay apostolate. It should be spread by every association of the lay apostolate. It should be spread by every modern means of expression—daily newspapers and periodicals, publications of both a scientific and a popular nature, radio and television.

To this diffusion, Our beloved sons, the laity, can greatly contribute by knowing this doctrine, making their actions conform to it, and by zealously striving to make others understand it.

They should be convinced that the truth and efficacy of this teaching is most easily demonstrated when they can show that it offers a safe path for the solution of present day difficulties. In this way they bring it to the attention of those who are opposed to it because they are ignorant of it and they may even cause a ray of its light to enter into their minds.

Education

A social doctrine has to be translated into reality and not just merely formulated. This is particularly true of the Christian social doctrine whose light is truth, whose objective is justice and whose driving force is love.

Hence We stress the fact that it is of the greatest importance that Our beloved sons not only know this social doctrine but that they be educated according to it.

Christian education should be complete in extending itself to every kind of obligation. Hence it should strive to implant and foster among the faithful an awareness of their obligation to carry on their economic and social activities in a Christian manner.

The transition from theory to practice is of its very nature difficult. And this is especially true when one tries to reduce to concrete terms a social doctrine such as that of the Church. It is difficult on account of the deep rooted selfishness of human beings, the materialism with which modern society is steeped, and the difficulty of singling out precisely the demands of justice in particular cases.

Consequently, it is not enough for this education that men be taught their social obligations. They must also be given by practical action the methods that will enable them to fulfill these duties.

Apostolate of the Laity

Education to act in a Christian manner in economic and social matters will hardly succeed unless those being educated play an active role in their own formation, and unless the education is also carried on through action.

Just as one cannot acquire the right use of liberty except by using liberty correctly, so one learns Christian behavior in social and economic matters by actual Christian action in those fields.

Hence, in social education the associations and organizations of the lay apostolate play an important role, especially those that have as their specific objective the Christianization of the economic and social sectors of the temporal order. Indeed, many members of these associations can draw profit from their daily experiences to form themselves more completely and also to contribute to the social education of youth.

At this point it seems opportune to recall to all, the great and the lowly, the Christian concept of life, which requires a spirit of moderation and of sacrifice. Unfortunately, there is everywhere prevalent a hedonistic conception and tendency which would reduce life to the search for pleasure and the full satisfaction of all the passions, with a consequent great loss to both body and soul.

On the natural level, simplicity of life and temperance in the lower appetites is a wisdom productive of good. On the supernatural level, the Gospels and the whole ascetic tradtion of the Church require a sense of mortification and of penance which assure the rule of the spirit over the flesh and offer an efficacious means of expiating the punishment due to sin, from which no one, except Jesus Christ and His Immaculate Mother, is exempt.

Practical Suggestions

In reducing social principles and directives to practice, one usually goes through three stages: reviewing the situation, judging it in the light of these principles and

directives, and deciding what can and what should be done according to the mode and degree permitted by the situation itself.

These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: look, judge, act.

It is particularly important that youth be made to dwell often on these three stages and as far as possible reduce them to action. The knowledge acquired in this way is not merely abstract ideas but is something to be translated into deeds.

In the applications of doctrine there can arise even among upright and sincere Catholics differences of opinion. When this happens, they should be watchful to keep alive mutual esteem and respect and should strive to find points of agreement for efficacious and suitable action. They should not exhaust themselves in interminable discussions and, under pretext of the better or the best, omit to do the good that is possible and is thus obligatory.

Catholics in their economic-social activities often find themselves in close contact with others who do not share their view of life. In these circumstances, Our sons should be very careful that they are consistant and never make compromises on religion and morals. At the same time let them show themselves animated by a spirit of understanding and disinterestedness, ready to cooperate loyally in achieving objectives that of their nature are good or at least reducible to good.

It is clear, however, that when the Hierarchy has made a decision on the point at issue, Catholics are bound to obey their directives, because the Church has the right and obligation not merely to guard ethical and religious principles, but also to intervene authoritatively in the temporal sphere when it is a matter of judging the application of these principles to concrete cases.

Manifold Action and Responsibility

From instruction and education one must pass to action. This is a task that belongs particularly to Our sons, the laity, since in virtue of their condition of life they are constantly engaged in activities and in the formation of institutions that in their finality are temporal.

In performing such a noble task, it is essential that Our sons be professionally qualified and carry on their occupation in conformity with its own proper laws in order to secure effectively the desired ends. It is equally necessary, however, that they act within the framework of the principles and directives of Christian social teaching and in an attitude of loyal trust and filial obedience to ecclesiastical authority.

Let them remember that when in the execution of temporal affairs they do not follow the principles and directives of Christian social teaching, not only do they fail in their obligations and often violate the rights of their brethren, but they can even cast into discredit that very doctrine which, in spite of its intrinsic value, seems to be lacking in a truly directive power.

A Grave Danger

As we have already noted, modern man has greatly deepened and extended his knowledge of the laws of nature and has made instruments that make him lord of their forces. He has even produced gigantic and spectacular works. Nevertheless, in his striving to master and transform the external world, he is in danger of forgetting and of destroying himself. As Pope Pius XI, Our predecessor, observes with deep sadness in the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno:"

"And so bodily labor, which was decreed by Providence for the good of man's body and soul even after original sin, has everywhere been changed into an instrument of strange perversion: for dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed, where men are corrupted and degraded."[48]

In a similar manner Pope Pius XII, Our predecessor, rightly asserted that our age is marked by a clear contrast between the immense scientific and technical progress and the fearful human decline shown by "its monstrous masterpiece" of "transforming man into a giant of the physical world at the expense of his spirit, which is reduced to that of a pygmy in the supernatural and eternal world."[49]

Once again there is verified today in a most striking manner, what was asserted of the pagans by the Psalmist: "men forget their own being in their works and admire their productions to the point of idolatry; the idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men."[50]

Recognition of Values

In Our paternal care as Universal Pastor of Souls, We urgently invite Our sons to take care that they keep alive and active an awareness of a hierarchy of values as they carry on their temporal affairs and seek their immediate ends.

Certainly, the Church has taught and always teaches that scientific-technical progress and the resultant material well-being are truly good and, as such, mark an important phase in human civilization. Nevertheless, these things should be valued according to their true worth, namely, as instruments or means used to achieve more effectively a higher end, that a facilitating and promoting the spiritual perfection of mankind, both in the natural and the supernatural order.

We desire that the warning words of the Divine Master should ever sound in the ears of men: "For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul?"[51]

Sanctification of Holy Days

To safeguard the dignity of man as a creature endowed with a soul formed in the image and likeness of God, the Church has always demanded an exact observance of the third precept of the decalogue: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day."[52] God has a right to demand of man that he dedicate a day of the week to worship, in which the spirit, free from material preoccupations, can lift itself up and open itself by thought and by love to heavenly things, examining in the secret of its conscience its obligatory and necessary relations towards its Creator.

In addition, man has the right and even the need to rest in order to renew the bodily strength used up by hard daily work, to give suitable recreation to the senses and to promote domestic unity, which requires frequent contact and a peaceful living together of all the members of the family.

Consequently, religion, morality and hygiene, all unite in the law of periodic repose which the Church has for centuries translated into the sanctification of Sunday through participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, a memorial and application of the redemptive work of Christ for souls.

It is with great grief that We must acknowledge and deplore the negligence of, if not the downright disrespect for, this sacred law and the consequent harmful results for the health of both body and soul of Our beloved workers.

In the name of God and for the material and spiritual interests of men, We call upon all, public authorities, employers and workers, to observe the precepts of God and His Church, and We remind each one of his grave responsibilities before God and society.

Renewed Obligation

In what We have briefly exposed above, it would be an error if Our sons, especially the laity, should consider it more prudent to lessen their personal Christian commitment in the world. Rather should they renew and increase it.

Our Lord, in the sublime prayer for the unity of the Church did not ask the Father to take His own from the world but to preserve them from evil: "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil."[53]

We should not create an artificial opposition between the perfection and one's personal active presence in the world, as if a man could not perfect himself except by putting aside all temporal activity and as if, whenever such action is done, a man is inevitably led to compromise his personal dignity as a human being and as a believer.

Instead of this being so, it is perfectly in keeping with the plan of Divine Providence that each one develop and perfect himself through his daily work, which for almost all human beings is of a temporal nature. Today, the Church is confronted with the immense task of giving a human and Christian note to modern civilization, a note that is required and is almost asked for by that civilization itself for its further development and even for its continued existence.

As we have already emphasized, the Church fulfills this mission through her lay sons, who should thus feel

pledged to carry on their professional activities as the fulfillment of a duty, as the performance of a service in internal union with God and with Christ and for His glory. As St. Paul points out: "whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all for the glory of God,"[54] and "all whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."[55]

Greater Efficiency in Temporal Affairs

In temporal affairs and institutions, whenever an awareness of values and supernatural ends is secured, there is at the same time a strengthening of their power to achieve their immediate specific ends. The words of Our Divine Master are still true: "Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God and His justice: and all these things shall be added unto you."[56]

When it is "now light in the Lord"[57] and one walks as "children of the light,"[58] the fundamental demands of justice are more securely grasped in the most difficult and complex regions of temporal affairs, namely those in which selfishness — individual, group or racial — often causes thick clouds of darkness. When one is animated by the charity of Christ one feels united to others, and the needs, suffering and joys of others are felt as one's own.

Consequently, the action of each one, no matter what the objective or what the circumstances in which it may be realized, cannot help being more disinterested, more energetic and more human, because charity "is patient, is kind . . . seeketh not her own . . . rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth . . . hopeth all things endureth all things."[59]

Mystical Body of Christ

We cannot conclude our encyclical without recalling another sublime truth and reality, namely that we are living members of the Mystical Body of Christ, which is His Church:

"For as the body is one and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body: so also is Christ."[60]

We invite with paternal urgency all Our sons belonging to either the clergy or the laity to be deeply conscious of this dignity and nobility due to the fact that they are grafted onto Christ as shoots on a vine: "I am the vine and you are the branches,"[61] and they are thus called to live by His very life. Hence, when one carries on one's proper activity, even if it be of temporal nature, in union with Jesus the Divine Redeemer, every work becomes a continuation of His Work and penetrated with Redemptive power: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit."[62] It thus becomes a work which contributes to one's personal supernatural perfection and helps to extend to others the fruits of the Redemption and leavens with the ferment of the Gospel the civilization in which one lives and works.

Our era is penetrated and shot through by radical errors, it is torn and upset by deep disorders. Nevertheless, it is also an era in which immense possibilities for good are opend to the Church.

Beloved brethren and sons, the review which in union with you We have been able to make of the various problems of modern social life from the dawn of the teaching of Pope Leo XIII has been, as it were, an unfolding of a series of statements and resolves on which We invite you to dwell and meditate deeply.

Take courage in the co-operation of all for the realization on earth of the Kingdom of Christ. It is "A kingdom of truth and of life; a kingdom of holiness and grace; a kingdom of justice, of love and of peace,"[63] which assures the enjoyment of the heavenly goods for which we were created and for which we long.

Here one is concerned with the doctrine of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, mother and teacher of all the nations, whose light illumines, enkindles and inflames, whose warming voice filled with heavenly wisdom pertains to all times, whose power ever offers efficacious and suitable remedies for the increasing needs of men and for the deprivations and anxieties of the present life.

That voice is in union with that of the Psalmist of old which unceasingly fortifies and lifts up our minds: "I will hear what the Lord will speak in me: for he will speak peace unto his people: and unto His saints: and unto them that are converted to the heart. Surely his salvation is near to them that fear him: that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth have met each other: Justice and peace have kissed. Truth is sprung out of the earth: and justice hath looked down from heaven. For the Lord will give goodness: and our earth shall yield her fruit. Justice shall walk before him: and shall set his steps in the way."[64]

Such is the desire that We make in ending this letter, to which We have for a considerable time given our solicitude for the Universal Church. We desire that the Divine Redeemer of men, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and justice and sanctification and redemption,"[65] may reign and triumph gloriously throughout the ages, in all and over all. We desire that human society being restored to order, all nations may firmly enjoy prosperity, happiness and peace.

As a portent of these wishes and a pledge of Our paternal good will, may the apostolic blessing, which We give from Our heart in the Lord, descend on you, venerable brethren, and on all the faithful entrusted to your care and especially on those who will reply with generosity to Our appeals.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, May 15, in the year 1961, the third of Our Pontificate.

Footnotes to Encyclical

(1) I Timothy 3:15. (2) John 14:6. (3) John 8:12. (4) Mark 8:2. (5) Writings of Pope Leo XIII, Vol. XI (1891), pp 97-144. (6) Ibid., p. 107. (7) Works of St. Thomas, "De Regimine Principum," I, 15. (8) Acta Apostolicae Sedis, XXIII (1931), p. 185.—Notes # 9-15: Ibidem. (9) p. 189. (10) pp. 177-228. (11) p. 199. (12) p. 200. (13) p. 201. (14) p. 210 s. (15) p. 211. (16) A.A.S. XXXIII (1941), p. 196. — Notes #17-23: Ibidem: (17) p. 197. (18) p. 196. (19) p. 198 s. (20) p. 199. (21) p. 201. (22) p. 202. (23) p. 203. (24) A.A.S. XXIII (1931), p. 203. (25) Ibid., p. 203. (26) Ibid., p. 222 s. (27) A.A.S. XXXIII (1941), p. 200. (28) A.A.S. XXIII (1931), p. 195. (29) Ibid., p. 198. (30) Radio broadcast, Sept. 1, 1944. A.A.S. XXXVI (1944), p. 254. (31) Allocutio, Oct. 8, 1956. A.A.S. XLVIII (1956), pp. 799-800. (32) Radio broadcast, Sept. 1, 1944. A.A.S. XXXVI (1944), p. 253. (33) Radio broadcast, Dec. 23, 1942. A.A.S. XXXV (1943), p. 17. (34) Ibid., p. 20. (35) Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno," A.A.S. XXIII (1931), p. 214. (36) Writings of Pope Leo XIII, Vol. XI (1891), p. 114. (37) Matthew 6:19-20. (38) Matthew 25:40. (39) A.A.S. XXIII (1931), p. 202. (40) Allocutio, May 3, 1960. A.A.S. LII (1960), p. 465. (41) Ibid. (42) I John 3:16-17. (43) Encyclical "Summi Pontificatus," A.A.S. XXXI (1939), pp. 428-429. (44) Genesis 1:28. (45) Ibid. (46) Conf. I, 1. (47) Psalms 126:1. (48) A.A.S. XXIII (1931), p. 221 s. (49) Christmas eve radio broadcast, 1952. A.A.S. XLVI (1953), p. 10. (50) Psalms 113:4. (51) Matthew 16:26. (52) Exodus 20:8. (53) John 17:15. (54) I Corinthians 10:31. (55) Colossians 3:17. (56) Matthew 6:33. (57) Ephesians 5:1. (58) Ibid. (59) I Corinthians 13:4-7. (60) Ibid., 12:12. (61) John 15:5. (62) Ibid. (63) Preface to Mass, Feast of Christ the King. (64) Psalms 84:9-14. (65) I Corinthians 1:30.

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